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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY	USSR	REPORT	
SUBJECT	1. Relative Popularity and Strength of Soviet Governmental Leaders; Fate of Beriya and Shtemenko 2. Infiltration of the Military into the KGB/MVD	DATE DISTR.	5 October 1954
DATE OF INFO.		NO. OF PAGES	2
PLACE ACQUIRED		REFERENCE NO.	RD
		REFERENCES	

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1. According to informants, as of summer 1954, Premier G.M. Malenkov appeared to be enjoying a position of some confidence on the part of the Soviet populace at large. Even though it would seem that the people are so apathetic that they would believe no one any longer, they nevertheless are looking toward Malenkov to fulfill their great hope for an improvement in their standard of living. As a reflection of the people's negative attitude toward Stalin, and toward key Party figures other than Malenkov, such expressions as, "Thank God that we have Malenkov", have often been uttered by the populace. Malenkov also commands the respect of the military.

2. On the other hand, individuals in the USSR do not say very much about Lt. General N.S. Khrushchev. [redacted]
Khrushchev has had most of his service in the Ukrainian SSR.

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3. Whereas Marshal N.A. Bulganin is generally supported by the military by virtue of his position as Minister of Defense, there are those who dislike him because of his extreme harshness, and because he is a very decisive and sometimes arbitrary man. [redacted] the demotion of Soviet Army General S.M. Shtemenko, former chief of the General Staff of the Soviet Army, to the rank of lieutenant general as an example of one of Bulganin's arbitrary actions. [redacted]
the underlying reason for this demotion was that one of Shtemenko's promotions had had the recommendation of Beriya. Shtemenko is presently chief of staff of the Novosibirsk Military District (sic, West Siberian?)

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4. [redacted] recently the KGB (Committee of State Security) and certain former MVD directorates have received an influx of military officers (presumably non-intelligence) from directorates of the Ministry of Defense. These transfers have taken place, and are continuing to take place, quietly. From this,

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STATE	EV	X	ARMY	CV	X	NAVY	X	AIR	X	FBI	X	AEC		OCI	CV	X		
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[redacted] Bulganin has taken over control of the KGB and the MVD.¹

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5. By comparison, V.M. Molotov is better known to the Soviet public than either Khrushchev or Bulganin; however, Marshal K. Ye. Voroshilov is better known than Molotov, because of the former's early popularity, which dates back to the end of the Civil War.
6. It has been said among senior military men in Moscow that L.P. Beriya was executed prior to his trial. It is the belief of some of these military men within the Ministry of Defense that an open trial was avoided because his open court testimony would have implicated other high-ranking officials. [redacted] Beriya planned to seek his support from the rural population by liquidating the kolkhozy after he had seized power. Beriya was said to have gone so far as to prepare manifestos to kolkhozy stating that they would be liquidated and that all the land would be returned to the peasants as private property.

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1. [redacted] Comment: [redacted]

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[redacted] the Soviet press has reported that these organizations are headed by Colonel General I.A. Serov and S.N. Kruglov.

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[redacted] while Beriya was still in power, Bulganin insisted that the Third Directorate of the MVD be turned over to him, but this move was blocked by the CC/CPSU and the Council of Ministers.

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